

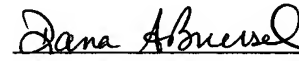
REMARKS

By the present Amendment, the specification has been amended to update the application's priority data. It is respectfully submitted that the claims of the application are fully supported by the specification, introduce no new matter, and are patentable over the prior art.

Prompt and favorable action on these claims, namely claims 1-18, is earnestly requested. Should the Examiner desire a telephonic interview to resolve any outstanding matters, he is sincerely invited to contact the undersigned at (631) 501-5713.

Respectfully submitted,

Carter, DeLuca, Farrell & Schmidt, LLP
445 Broad Hollow Road - Suite 225
Melville, New York 11747
Tel.: (631) 501-5713
Fax: (631) 501-3526


Dana A. Brussel
Reg. No. 45,717
Attorney for Applicants

Send correspondence to:
Chief Patent Counsel
Tyco Healthcare Group
150 Glover Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06856